

## DECISIVE PLAN TO END WAR FURNISHES BIG SURPRISE

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ner as he would array his facts or make a decision in a judicial tribunal.

He indulged in no flights of rhetoric, absolutely dispensed with gestures and resorted to none of the theatrical devices employed by popular orators. In other words, he permitted his speech to speak for itself, without ornament in the way of metaphor or striking phrases. The effect of his cold, measured statement of facts and clear cut logic was the more effective for the simple manner in which he approached his tremendous task.

Beyond the thrills imparted by the President and the Secretary of State in the first session of the great international conference was without more than passing interest.

Aside from the speeches of the American spokesman the actual business accomplished was of the preliminary character that ordinarily attends the convening of less momentous assemblies.

The great conference of world powers began with something of the atmosphere of an international social function.

The dignitaries of the participating nations arrived by motor with the air of men who looked forward to the tranquil consummation of preliminary plans for the momentous tasks confronting them. A great crowd of people hemmed the sidewalks in front of the impressive Memorial Continental Building, much after the fashion of a casually curious crowd eager to catch sight of bride and bridegroom at a fashionable church wedding.

Most of the people in the crowd knew the important actors who are to solve problems of tremendous world importance—Hughes, Root, Lodge and Underwood of the American delegation; Balfour and Geddes, who represent Great Britain; Borden, the Premier of the Dominion Government of Canada; Senator George F. Pearce, the representative of Australia; Sir John Salmond, who will speak for New Zealand; Scrimgeour, the white turbaned, black frock coated, brown faced envoy of India; the shaggy haired Briand, the doughty Juster, the sturdy Viviani of France; Prince Takugawa, leading spokesman for the Imperial Government of Japan; the blond bearded Senator Schanzler, sent by the Kingdom of Italy to assist in the solution of the world problems; the trim and bespectacled and almost ascetic Alfred Sze, the chief representative of the Chinese Government. These were the outstanding figures in the public mind.

### American Methods Surprising.

The foreign envoys and their technical advisers were probably surprised at the American method of launching so momentous an undertaking as that which had brought them to the diplomatic and political metropolis of the Western Hemisphere. Their experience at similar functions prepared them for a leisurely approach, made most agreeable by official ceremonials and delightful social functions.

They were permitted a brief half hour in which to visualize the beauties of the council chamber provided by the American Government for their deliberations. They proceeded through spacious marble corridors into a chamber 300 feet square, that at first glance suggested architectural thought of the French Renaissance and early American Colonial.

Impressive for real beauty as was the "Room of the Clock" at Paris, it did not compare with the white marble room which had been prepared for the meeting of the international arms conference. The most striking feature of it was a great glowing cluster of the national flags of the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, China, Belgium, the Netherlands and Portugal pendant over the center of the room. The next most conspicuous objects were two large portraits of the President and Secretary of State, Washington, his gentle spouse, hanging high up on the western wall.

On the main floor were flat desks close together, sloping tier of seats, and within it four other tables for the accommodation of the secretaries, translators, interpreters and stenographers. At the end of this series of tables to the west, with a chair, a gold eagle at the peak of its back, indicating the presiding officer.

The chairs grouped around the tables formed in the lower square were of the sort that one finds in the directors' room of great business enterprises. In front of each chair was the paraphernalia for office work: inkwells, pens, stationery and the like. The place designated for each delegation was marked with a card bearing the delegate's name.

### Space for Advisers in Rear.

Back of the space reserved for the delegates and their immediate advisers were rows of chairs for their technical advisers and army and navy attaches. On the north and south side, back of a railing, was a sloping tier of seats which were set aside for the accommodation of 300 reporters, special commissioners, journalists, essayists and recognized commentators on public events, some of whom are celebrated internationally.

In the low hung gallery extending around three sides of the room were seats for the diplomatic corps, the members of the Senate and of the House of Representatives and important officials.

The members of the American delegation, headed by Secretary Hughes, were among the first persons to arrive at the hall. It was their privilege and honor to act as hosts of the delegates of the foreign countries. They extended a cordial greeting to each envoy alighted from his motor and ascended the steps.

In the meantime the main hall was rapidly filling with men and women of official and social importance, who, visualizing the impressive beauty of the room, said many kind words regarding American taste in the matter of art and decorations. With the exception of the flags of the countries participating in the conference, the only display of bunting was in the way of small flags bearing the crests of the American states and Territories, but each one of them, bathed in a dazzling flood of light from chandeliers and side lights, added a helpful touch of color to the scene.

At 10:30 o'clock all the delegates had arrived, and were familiarizing themselves with their surroundings. Planking them were military and naval advisors and aids, in colorful dress uniform.

At 10:45 the members of Congress seated in the gallery, facing to the south entrance of the brilliantly lighted chamber, clapped their hands and the audience arose to receive the President of the United States, who, like all of the other delegates, wore a cutaway morning coat and a black four-in-hand scarf. The President, with a slight lifting of brows, went directly to the presiding officer's chair, which was temporarily vacated by Mr. Hughes.

The President shook hands with his Secretary of State and turned to his left, extending his greetings to Mr. Balfour.

Secretary Hughes, who moved to the adjoining chair, between the President and Mr. Balfour, rapped lightly with an ivory gavel and launched the great international undertaking with this brief announcement: "Prayer will be offered by the Rev. Mr. Abernethy."

The prayer was offered while the brilliant assembly stood with bowed heads during the two minutes of extempore prayer. Before the delegates had time to resume their seats Secretary Hughes announced "The President of the United States" and stepped to the rear.

which he followed in the French text placed before him. There was no discounting the surprise of Prince Takugawa, Baron Kato and Ambassador Ishihara, the delegates from Japan. The Italian, Portuguese and Belgian envoys appeared to be greatly pleased, if a trifle startled, at the directness with which Mr. Hughes was stating his case.

### Naval Figures All Accurate.

The figures and facts regarding specific units of the British and Japanese navies permitted no doubt as to the complete accuracy of them. While the Secretary was reading them and enumerating the methods by which they could be dispensed with, one could have heard a pin drop in the vast assembly hall. His knowledge of naval conditions which had previously been worked out with mathematical exactness was fully sustained by the nods of the naval experts of not only Great Britain and Japan, but of those representing France and Italy.

That the Secretary had more complete information at hand was revealed by the fact that when the technical details of the formal proposal that the

United States would submit would be immediately furnished to the delegates. His final announcement provoked a storm of applause in which some of the delegates for the first time joined. He said:

"With the acceptance of this plan the burdens of meeting the demands of competition in naval armament will be lifted. Enormous sums will be released to aid the progress of civilization. At the same time the proper demands of national defense will be adequately met and the nations will have ample opportunities during the naval holiday of ten years to consider their future course. Preparations for offensive naval war will stop now."

The Secretary was compelled to pause for an instant while the applause continued. Without changing expression or tone of voice, he added the final word of his sensational address. It was in the nature of an announcement that he would not at this time take up the other topics which have been listed upon the tentative agenda proposed in anticipation of the conference.

Mr. Hughes rose again to propose that John W. Garrett be made the secretary-general of the conference. Mr. Garrett

was elevated to the post of honor in the same informal manner in which Mr. Hughes had been made presiding officer. He also announced that the official heads of the British, French, Italian, Japanese and American delegations would constitute a committee to prepare a program for the limitation of armaments.

Feature of the future discussions, and that the heads of delegations having interests in the Far East would select representatives for the committee which would map out a programme for the consideration of Asiatic and Pacific matters.

It is probable that the conference would have adjourned at this point if Senator Kenyon of Iowa had not called out the name of Premier Briand of France. His Congress associates and other persons in the audience joined in the demand for a speech from Mr. Briand. The French Premier appeared to be quite startled at this injection of domestic political methods into the proceedings of so august a body, but he was most amiable in complying, and in ringing staccato phrases that fell melodiously on the ear he expressed his complete sympathy for the purpose of the conference and told of the undying friendship of the French for the people of America.

M. Briand said: "France is with you in every way. It realizes the great debt of gratitude you rendered it while the country was being ravaged by the enemy." He asked the members of the conference to remember the position occupied by his Government, and he had come, he said, "to discuss with searching sincerity the burden of militarism which it was hoped would be lifted, not only from France but from all the world."

After the French Premier's little impromptu speech had been converted into English by the interpreter the members of the congress called "Japan, Japan," Prince Takugawa, short and round, was evidently prepared to make a speech. He arose and read in very good English from a sheet the appreciation and sympathy of his Government for the Washington conference, and pledged himself and associates to unite in making it a unit.

"The world needs peace," he said, "and Japan will do its utmost to promote it." The members of the congress then called for Italy, China, the Netherlands, Belgium and Portugal, and the heads of the delegations representing these countries all made short speeches in English

indorsing the purposes of the conference and pledged their good offices to make it a success.

A demand for "Balfour, Balfour," provoked Mr. Hughes to say that Mr. Balfour had expressed his attitude toward the conference in the speech he had made nominating the American Secretary of State as chairman of the conference. Then Senator Lodge arose and in precisely the same tones with which he might move an adjournment of the Senate suggested that the conference adjourn until Tuesday at 11 o'clock.

The two committees appointed by Mr. Hughes are expected to meet on Monday, so that when the conference again convenes a complete programme can be submitted.

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